A COLLECTION OF SVNDRY PETITIONS Presented to the KINGS Most excellent Majestie.

AS ALSO

To the two most Honourable Houses, now assembled in PARLIAMENT.

AND OTHERS,

Already signed, by most of the *Gentry*, *Ministers*, and *Free-holders* of severall Counties, in behalfe of *Episcopacie*, *Liturgie*, and supportation of *Church-Revenues*, and suppression of *Schismaticks*.

Collected by a faithfull Lover of the *Church*, for the comfort of the dejected *Clergy*, and all moderatly affected *Protestants*.

Published by his Majesties speciall Command.

Ezek. 34. 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but you must tread downe with your feet the residue also. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your hornes, till you have scattered them abroad; therefore will I save my flock, and they shall be no more a prey; and I will judge betweene Cattell and Cattell. And I will set up one Shepheard over them, and he shall feede them, even my servant David; *he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepheard. I the Lord will be their God, and my servant* David a Prince *among them. I the Lord have spoken it.*

Printed for *William Shearet*, 1642.




BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA

The Collector to the Reader.

READER,

LEt mee put thee in mind (as theſe times doe mee) of a ſpeciall Law in (that ſingular Patterne of a well compoſed State) *Sparta*. So ſenſible were they of the ill effects of Innovations in Government, that who ever propoſed a new Law, preſented himſelfe with a Halter about his neck, his Head paid the treſpaſſe of a new invented Prejudice. But oh; *Quantum mutantur Tempora, quantum nos*, So rare a gift have the illuminated fancies of this all-knowing age, That old women without Spectacles can diſcover Popiſh plots, young men and prentizes aſſume to regulate the Rebellion in *Ireland*, Sea-men and Marriners Reforme the Houſe of Peers, Poore men, Porters, and Labourers ſpy out a malignant party, and diſcipline them; The countrey clouted-ſhoe renew the decayed trade of the Citie, The Cobler patch up a Religion, & all theſe petition for a tranſlation, both of Church and State, with ſo little feare of the Halter, that they would thinke themſelves neglected, if they had not thanks for their care of the Re-publicke; only he that deſires the ratification of an old Law, or of a long ſetled Eccleſiaſtick Government, lookes as if the Halter were his ſhare; And though there be thirty thouſand hands ſubſcribed to it; 'Tis ods, not one of all thoſe dares preferre a Petition to that purpoſe: *Oh! Quis pudor quod non præſtet fides quod præſtitit infidelitas.* Oh! what a ſhame is it that an ignorant Seperatiſt ſhall covertly draw Subſcribers out of blind zeale to looſe papers', and thoſe to be annext to ſome *Embryon* yet unhatcht, and delivered in the name of a County, with confidence, when a Knight of a ſhire ſhall perhaps ſmother the true child, and dares not owne it. That a few Innovators ſhall be able to ſummon to *Blackheath, South-marke*, and *Saint-george* his fields, thouſands of credulous people, with implicite faiths, to goe along with Petitions, ſhall be ſhewed them when they come there, for the alteration of Lawes, and Government: and the Reſolutions of an aſſizes or Seſſions of Juſtices, publiſhed in all Pariſhes, ſigned by all the Free-holders of a County for the ſupportation of Lawes and Government, ſhall not produce one Patriot to preſent the unanimous deſires of a County: yet it fals out often; ſo when ſingle hearted men are encounter'd by a faction, each man thinkes he ſtands alone unaſſured of a ſecond; when

ten of the other confederated make more noyse then 10000. silent men. Episcopacy and Lyturgie are both legally planted, at this time both violently assaulted: The question is, whether the battery, or the defence be the stronger: the one side charges furiously; the other suffers silently, patiently, and a reserved strength oft masters a violent: But each orthodox sonne of the Church thinkes himselfe in *Eliahs* case, that hee alone is left of all the Prophets, and alas, what can hee doe? And perhaps thou my Reader art one of those, *Courage man*; the same God that taught him to know, he had reserved seven thousand, that had never bowed their knees to *Baall*, when he opens thy eyes, can shew thee not seven, but seventy times seven thousand true Protestants, that will lend their hands and hearts to uphold that Apostolicke order, this blessed forme of divine service. The businesse is, 'tis a hard time, every man's afraid to breake his shins by being foremost: But the Ice is broke already. This Collection of these many sleeping Petitions wil shew every County that the way is open: And since noise and number are taken into consideration, the forwardnesse of the Assaylants will, I beleeve, put shame upon the Defendants to be so farre behind. The Iudges being honourable, and impartially receiving the arguments on both sides, I presume none will discover a distrust of a faire acceptance, or betray a Trust (out of a personall respect) by detayning such Petitions, as the Counties have committed into their hands. If all such as are already signed see the light, I am sure this volume will be a large one, and the Number, and quality of the Defendants, as much over-sway the Opponents; as their arguments drawne from the Lawes of God and man, will outweigh the Motives of those, who only will, because they will. As if it were cause enough to overthrow established Lawes, that they have desired it, though they shew no reason for it: But if all other Counties, all true Protestants with like liberty expresse their affections; the distractions of the Church will be quickly setled; To that good worke I have lent my hand, by lending thee and the world this light. *Farewell.*

THE

A PETITION DELIVERED In to the Lords SPIRITUALL and TEMPORALL:

By Sir THOMAS ASTON *Baronet*, from the County *Palatine* of *Chester*, concerning EPISCOPACY.

To the High and Honourable Court of PARLIAMENT,

The Nobility, Knights, Gentry, Ministers, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County Palatine *of* Chester, *whose Names are subscribed in the severall Schedules hereunto annexed.*

Humbly shew;

THat whereas divers Petitions have lately beene carried about this County, against the present forme of Church-government, (and the hands of many persons of ordinary quality solicited to the same, with pretence to bee presented to this Honourable Assembly) which wee conceiving not so much to aime at Reformation, as absolute Innovation of Government, and such as must give a great advantage to the Adversaries of our Religion, wee held it our duty to disavow them all.

And humbly pray, that wee incurre no misecensure, if any such clamours have (without our privity) assum'd the name of the County.

Wee, as others, are sensible of the common grievances of the Kingdome, and have just cause to rejoyce at, and acknowledge with

thankefulneſſe, the pious care which is already taken for the ſuppreſſing of the growth of Popery, the better ſupply of able Miniſters, and the removing of all Innovation; and wee doubt not, but in your great Wiſedomes you will regulate the rigour of Eccleſiaſticall Courts, to ſuit with the temper of our Lawes, and the nature of Free-men.

Yet when wee conſider, that Biſhops were inſtituted in the time of the Apoſtles; That they were the great lights of the Church in all the firſt generall Counſels; That ſo many of them ſowed the ſeeds of Religion in their bloods, and reſcued Chriſtianity from utter extirpation in the Primitive Heathen perſecutions; That to them wee owe the redemption of the purity of the Goſpell wee now profeſſe from *Romiſh* corruption; That many of them for the propagation of the truth, became ſuch glorious Martyrs; That divers of them (lately and) yet living with us, have beene ſo great aſſertours of our Religion againſt its common enemy of *Rome*; And that their Government hath beene ſo long approved, ſo oft eſtabliſhed by the Common and Statute-lawes of this Kingdome; And as yet nothing in their Doctrine (generally taught) diſſonant from the Word of God, or the Articles ratified by Law. In this caſe to call their Government, a perpetuall Vaſſalage, an intollerable Bondage; And (*prima facie & inaudita altera parte*) to pray the preſent removall of them, or (as in ſome of their Petitions) to ſeeke the utter diſſolution and ruine of their offices (as Antichriſtian) we cannot conceive to reliſh of juſtice or charity, nor can wee joyne with them.

But on the contrary, when wee conſider the tenour of ſuch writings, as in the name of Petitions, are ſpread amongſt the Common-people; the tenents preached publiquely in Pulpits, and the contents of many printed Pamphlets, ſwarming amongſt us; all of them dangerouſly exciting a diſobedience to the eſtabliſhed forme of Government, and their ſeverall intimations of the deſire of the power of the Keyes, and that their Congregations may execute Eccleſiaſticall cenſures within themſelves, wee cannot but expreſſe our juſt feares, that their deſire is to introduce an abſolute Innovation of Presbyterall Government, whereby wee who are now governed by the Canon and Civill Lawes, diſpenſed by twenty-ſix Ordinaries (eaſily reſponſall to Parliaments for any deviation from the rule of Law) conceive wee ſhould become expoſed to the meere Arbitrary Government of a numerous Presbitery, who together with their ruling Elders, will ariſe to neere forty thouſand Church Governours,

vernours, and with their adherents, must needs beare so great a sway in the Common-wealth, that if future inconvenience shall be found in that Government, wee humbly offer to consideration, how these shall bee reducible by Parliaments, how consistent with a Monarchy, and how dangerously conducible to an Anarchy, which wee have just cause to pray against, as fearing the consequences would prove the utter losse of Learning and Lawes, which must necessarily produce an extermination of Nobility, Gentry, and Order, if not of Religion.

With what vehemency of Spirit, these things are prosecuted, and how plausibly such popular infusions spread as incline to a parity, wee held it our duty to represent to this Honourable assembly; And humbly pray, That some such present course be taken, as in your Wisdomes shall bee thought fit, to suppresse the future dispersing of such dangerous discontents amongst the Common-people. Wee having great cause to feare, that of all the distempers that at present threaten the well-fare of this State, there is none more worthy the mature and grave consideration of this Honourable assembly, then to stop the Torrent of such Spirits before they swell beyond the bounds of Government: Then wee doubt not but his Majesty persevering in his gracious inclination to heare the complaints, and relieve the grievances of his Subjects in frequent Parliaments, it will so unite the Head and the Body, so indissolubly cement the affections of his people to our Royall Soveraigne, that without any other change of Government, Hee can never want revenue, nor wee justice.

Wee have presumed to annex a Coppy of a Petition (or Libell) dispersed, and certaine positions preacht in this County, which wee conceive, imply matter of dangerous consequence to the peace both of Church and State. All which wee humbly submit to your great Judgements, praying they may bee read.

And shall ever pray.

Subscribed to this Petition.

Foure Noblemen.
Knight Baronets, Knights and Esquires fourescore and odde.
Divines, threescore and tenne.
Gentlemen, three hundred and odde.
Free-holders, and other Inhabitants, above six thousand.
All of the same County.

To the High and Honourable Court of PARLIAMENT:

The humble Petition of the Vniversity of OXFORD.

Sheweth,

THat whereas the Vniversity hath beene informed of severall Petitions concerning the present Government of this Church, and maintenance of the Clergy, which have of late beene exhibited to this Honourable Assembly; Wee could not but thinke our selves bound in duty to God, and this whole Nation, charity to our selves and Successours, who have, and are like to have more then ordinary interest in any resolution that shall bee taken concerning Church-affaires, in all humility, to desire the continuance of that forme of Government, which is now established here, and hath beene preserved in some of the Easterne and Westnerne Churches, in a continued Succession of *Bishops*, downe from the very Apostles to this present time; the like whereof cannot bee affirmed of any other forme of Government in any Church. Vpon which consideration, and such other motives as have beene already represented to this Honourable Parliament from other Persons and places (with whom Wee concurre) in behalfe of *Episcopacy*. Wee earnestly desire, that you would protect that ancient and *Apostolicall Order* from ruine or diminution.

And become farther Suiters for the continuance of those pious Foundations of *Cathedrall Churches*, with their Lands and Revenues,

As dedicate to the Service and Honour of God, soone after the Plantation of Christianity in the *English Nation:*

As thought fit and usefull to bee preserved for that end, when the Nurseries of Superstition were demolished, and so continued in the last and best times, since the blessed Reformation, under King *Edward 6.* Queen *Elizabeth*, and King *James*, Princes renowned through the World for their piety and wisdome:

As approved and confirmed by the Lawes of this Land, ancient and moderne:

As the principall outward motive and encouragement of all Students, especially in Divinity, and the fittest reward of some deepe and eminent Scholars;

As producing or nourishing in all ages, many godly and learned Men, who have most strongly asserted the truth of that Religion Wee professe, against the many fierce oppositions of our adversaries of *Rome*.

As affording a competent portion in an ingenuous way to many younger Brothers of good Parentage, who devote themselves to the Ministery of the Gospell:

As the onely meanes of subsistence to a multitude of Officers and other Ministers, who with their Families depend upon them, and are wholly maintained by them:

As the maine authours or upholders of diverse Schooles, Hospitals, High-wayes, Bridges, and other publique and pious Workes:

As speciall causes of much profit and advantage to those Cities where they are scituate, not onely by relieving their poore, and keeping convenient Hospitality, but by occasioning a frequent resort of Strangers from other parts, to the great benefit of all Tradesmen, and Inhabitants in those places:

As the goodly Monuments of our Predecessours Piety, and present Honour of this Kingdome in the eye of Forraigne Nations:

As the chiefe support of many thousand Familes of the Laity who enjoy faire estates from them in a free way:

As yeelding a constant and ample revenue to the Crowne:

And as by which many of the learned *Professours* in our *University* are maintained.

The subversion or alienation whereof must (as wee conceive) not onely bee attended with such consequences as will redound to the scandall of many well affected to our Religion, but open the mouthes of our adversaries, and of Posterity against us, and is likely in time to draw after it harder conditions upon a considerable part of the Laity, an universall cheapnesse and contempt upon the Clergy, a lamentable drooping and defection of industry and knowledge in the *Universities*; which is easie to foresee, but will bee hard to remedy.

May it therefore please this Honourable Assembly, *upon these and such other Considerations as your great Wisdomes shall suggest, to take such pious care for the continuance of these* Religious Houses, *and their Revenewes, according to the best intentions of their* Founders, *as may be to the most furtherance of Gods glory and service, the Honour of this Church and Nation, the advancement of* Religion *and*

Learning, *the encouragement of the modest hopes and honest endeavours of so many hundred* Students *in the* Universities

Who doe and shall ever pray, &c.

Dat. Anno Dom. *Millesimo sexcent' quad' primo è Domo Convocationis, in celebri Conventu Doctorum ac Magistrorum, omnibus & singulis assentientibus.*

Honoratissimis viris Equitibus, Civibus, & Burgensibus Supremæ Curiæ Parliamentariæ SENATORIBUS Consultissimis.

Summa cum demissione.

Senatores Honoratissimi,

NOn veremur ne *voluentibus tanta negotia molesti simus* Academia Cantabrigiensis, *cum nihil sit aut ad* Religionem *certius, aut ad splendorem nominis excelsius, quam suscipere* Litterarum *clientelam. In quo studio, cùm singularis animi vestri propensio semper eluxerit, tum nulla in re magis possit eminere, quàm si* Ecclesiæ *honestamenta ea, quæ sub* optimis Regibus *tam diu optinuerunt, indelabata tueamini.*

Non enim agitur unius Academiæ, *non unius ætatis causa; nam nec industria potest non relanguescere, nec bona indoles ali, atque augeri, nec vota parentum non in irritum cadere, nisi spe non vana suffulciantur. Quam præmaturum putemus bonis artibus occasum imminere, si stipendium idem* Militi *sit quòd* Imperatori? *Sunt qui exp diendis* Scholasticorum *ambagibus, evolvendis antiquorum* Patrum *monumentis, expurgandæ* feci Romanæ, *velut* Augiæ stabulo, *se totus impenderunt; nec aliam mercedem prensant, quam in* Ecclesia Cathedrali *tandem aliquando quasi in portu conquiescere; ita fit, ut quod ignavis* Asylum inertiæ *est, id candidioribus ingeniis* pro stimulo *sit ad optima persequenda, nec æquitas judiciorum vestrorum ferret, improbitatem nonnullorum in publicam calamitatem redundare.* Impetigo Romana *quam amplam tum sibi nacta videbitur se diffundendi materiam, cùm non sit nisi imbelles adversarios habitura? neque enim certamini, vacare possunt, qui id unicè agunt,*

ut

ut in roſtris Concionibus *ſudent; etiam num percentiſcere nobis videmur undam atque inanem* Accademiam, *& antiquam paupertatem quaſi præludio perhorreſcimus: nec veſtra progenies non aliquando ventura eſt in tantarum miſeriarum partes.* Quin itaque Senatores Ampliſſimi, per ſpes Parentum, per illecebras induſtriæ, per ſubſidia ſimul & ornamenta pietatis, per vincula, nervos, & firmamenta Literarum, velitis ſplendorem Eccleſiæ, qui longiſſimis ab uſque temporibus, ad noſtra tempora deductus eſt, authoritate veſtra communire. *Sed quia Lingua nativa dolores & deſideria ſua felicius exprimit, annexam* Literis Petitionem *benevolis auribus excipietis.*

Honori veſtro Deditiſſimi

Procancellarius, reliquuſque cœtus
Accademiæ CANTABRIGIENSIS.

Datæ è frequenti Conventu noſtro *Cantabr.*
tertio Idus Aprilis 1641.

Lecta 12. *Maii* 1641.

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgeſſes of the Houſe of *Commons* aſſembled in *Parliament.*

The humble Petition of the Vniverſity *of* CAMBRIDGE.

Sheweth,

THat your *Petitioners* having heard of divers ſuggeſtions offered to this *Honourable Court* by way of Remonſtrance, tending to the ſubverſion of *Cathedrall Churches*, and alienation of thoſe *Lands*, by which they are ſupported, being the ancient Inheritance of the *Church*, Founded and beſtowed by the Religious bounty of many *Famous and Renowned Kings and Princes of this Land*, and other *Benefactours*, both of the *Clergy and Laity*, and eſtabliſhed and confirmed unto them by the *Lawes* of this *Kingdome*, and ſo accordingly have beene employed to the advancement of *Learning*, the encouragement

ment of *Students*, and preferrement of *Learned men*, besides many other pious and charitable *Vses*.

May it pleaſe this *Honourable Court*, out of their great wiſdome, and tender care for the cheeriſhing of *Learning*, and furtherance of the *Studies*, and paines of thoſe who have, and doe devote themſelves to the ſervice of the Church, gratiouſly to Protect, and ſecure thoſe *Religious Foundations* from ruine, and Alienation; and withall to take order that they may bee reduc'd to the due obſervation of their *Statutes*, and that all *Innovations* and *Abuſes*, which have by ſome mens miſcarriages crept in, may bee reformed, that ſo the *Students* of our *Vniverſity*, which by the preſent feares, both are, and will bee much ſadded and dejected may bee the better invited to purſue their *Studies* with alacrity, and the places themſelves diſpoſed to the moſt ſerviceable and deſerving men; according to their firſt Inſtitution.

And your Petitioners as in duty bound ſhall ever pray, &c.

To the Honourable Houſe of *Commons* now aſſembled in the high Court of *Parliament*.

The moſt humble Petition of the Nobility, Gentry, Clergy, and Commons within the County of Nottingham.

Humbly ſhewing,

THat whereas wee are informed, that a Petition, together with a Remonſtrance, hath in the Name of this County, beene heretofore preſented to this Honourable Houſe, for the alterations in Church-Government.

Wee doe humbly crave leave to certifie your Honours, that the ſame was done without our knowledge, or conſent, and that wee doe hereby diſ-avow the ſame. And with the like humility, doe deſire That the long eſtabliſhed Government of the Church may ſtill continue, and that the abuſes and errours of ſome particular perſons may not

not cause the alteration of the ancient Government; but rather, that such persons should suffer according to their Demerits. And wee likewise humbly crave, the *Booke of Common Prayer*, by Law established, may continue in force, with such alteration (if there bee cause) as to your Honours Wisdomes shall seeme meet.

And as in Duty bound, Wee shall dayly pray, &c.

Subscribed by one Viscount, five Knights, above a hundred Gentlemen of quality, all the Clergy of the County, and above six thousand Commoners, being all of them Communicants.

The Remonstrance and Petition of the County of *Huntington*, the Knights, Gentlemen, Clergy, Free-holders, and Inhabitants.

To the Right Honourable the Lords, and Commons assembled in *Parliament*, for the continuance of the *Church-Government*, and *Divine Service*, or Booke of *Common-prayer*.

Presented to the House of Peeres by the Lord Privy Seale the 8. of December, 1641.

We humbly shew,

THat whereas many attempts have beene practised, and divers Petitions from severall Counties, and other places within this Kingdome, framed and penned in a close and subtle manner, to import more than is at first discernable by any ordinary eye, or that was imparted to those who signed the same, have beene carried about to most places against the present forme and frame of *Church-Government*, and *Divine-Service*, or *Common Prayers*, and the hands of many persons of ordinary quality sollicited to the same, with pretence to bee presented to this Honourable assembly in Parliament, and under colour of removing some Innovations lately crept into the Church, and Worship of God, and reforming some abuses in the Ecclesiasticall Courts, which wee conceiving and fearing not so much to aime at the taking away of the said Innovations, and Reformation of abuses, as tending to an absolute Innovation of Church-Government,

and ſubverſion of that Order, and Forme of *Divine Service* which hath happily continued amongſt us ever ſince the Reformation of Religion: Out of a tender and zealous regard hereunto, wee have thought it our duty, not onely to diſavow all ſuch Petitions, but alſo to manifeſt our publike affections, and deſires to continue the Forme of *Divine Service*, and *Common-prayers*, and the preſent Government of the Church, as the ſame have beene continued ſince the firſt Reformation, and ſtand ſo eſtabliſhed by the Lawes and Statutes of this Kingdome.

For when wee conſider that the Forme of *Divine Service* expreſſed and contained in the Booke of *Common prayer*, was with great care, piety, and ſincerity, reviſed and reduced from all former corruptions and *Romiſh* Superſtitions, by thoſe holy and ſelected Inſtruments of the Reformation of Religion within this Church, and was by them reſtored to its firſt purity, according as it was inſtituted and practiſed in the Primitive times, ſtandeth confirmed, eſtabliſhed, and enJoyned by Act of Parliament, and Royall Injunctions, and hath ever ſince had the generall approbation of the godly, and a publike uſe and continuance within this Church. And that Biſhops were inſtituted, and have had their being and continuance ever ſince the firſt planting of Chriſtian Religion amongſt us, and the reſt of the Chriſtian World, that they were the lights and glorious Lamps of Gods Church, that ſo many of them ſowed the ſeeds of Chriſtian Religion in their blouds, which they willingly powred out therefore, that by them Chriſtianity was reſcued and preſerved from utter extirpation in the fierce and moſt cruell Perſecutions of Pagan Emperous, that to them wee owe the redemption of the purity of the Goſpell, and the Reformation of the Religion wee now profeſſe, from *Romiſh* corruption, that many of them for the propagation of that Truth became glorious Martyrs, leaving unto us an holy example, and an honourable remembrance of their faith and Chriſtian fortitude, that divers of them lately, and yet living with us, have beene ſo great Aſſertours and Champions of our Religion againſt the Common enemy of *Rome*, and that their Government hath beene ſo ancient, ſo long approved, and ſo often eſtabliſhed by the Lawes and Statutes of this Kingdome, and as yet nothing in their Doctrine (generally taught) diſſonant from the Word of God, or the Articles eſtabliſhed by Law, and that moſt of them are of ſingular learning and piety. In this caſe to call the forme of *Divine Service* and *Common-prayers*, Erronious, Popiſh, Superſtitious, Idolatrous, and Blaſphemous, and to call

the

the Government by Bishops, a perpetuall vassallage, and intollerable bondage: and at the first step, and before the parties concerned bee heard, to pray the present removall of them, or the utter dissolution and extirpation of them, their Courts, and their Officers, as Anti-christian and Diabolicall, wee cannot conceive to savour or relish of piety, justice, or charity, nor can wee joyne with them herein, but rather humbly pray a Reformation of the abuses, and punishment of the Offenders, but not the ruine or abolition of the Innocent.

Now on the contrary, when wee consider the tenour of such writings, as in the name of Petitions are spread amongst the Common people, the contents of many printed Pamphlets swarming at *London*, and over all Countries, the Sermons preached publikely in Pulpits, and other private places; and the bitter invectives divulged, and commonly spoken by many disaffected persons, all of them shewing an extreme averseness and dislike of the present Government of the Church, and Divine Service or Common Prayers; dangerously exciting a disobedience to the established forme of Government and Church Service, their severall intimations of the desire of the power of the keyes, and that their congregations may bee independent, and may execute Ecclesiasticall censures within themselves, whereby many Sects, and severall and contrary opinions will soone grow and arise, whereby great divisions and horrible factions will soone ensue thereupon, to the breach of that union, which is the sacred band and preservation of the Common peace of Church and State: their peremptory desires and bold assuming to themselves the liberty of conscience to introduce into the Church whatsoever they affect, and to refuse and oppose all things which themselves shall dislike, and what they dislike must not onely to themselves, but also to all others bee scandalous and burdensome, and must bee cried out upon, as great and unsupportable grievances, yea though the things in themselves bee never so indifferent, of never so long continuance in use and practise, and never so much desired and affected of others, so that where three or foure of them bee in a Parish, though five hundred others desire the use and continuance of things long used, all must bee altered or taken away as scandals and grievances for these three or foure, though to the offence of many others, and whatsoever they will have introduced, must bee imposed upon all others, and must by all bee admitted without scandall or offence, whereby multitudes of godly and wel-affected people are in some things deprived or abridged of what they desire and take comfort in, and have had a

long and lawfull use and practise of, and other things imposed upon them against their wils and liking, as if no accompt were to bee made of them, or no liberty of conscience were left unto them: which bold attempts of some few to arrogate to themselves, and to exercise over all others, what high presumption is it? and how great a tyranny may it prove over the minds and consciences of men? The great increase of late of Schismaticks and Sectaries, and of persons not onely separating and sequestring themselves from the publike Assembly at *Common Prayers* and *Divine Service*, but also opposing, and tumultuously interrupting others in the performance thereof in the publike Congregation, the frequent and many Conventicles held amongst them, and their often meetings at all publike conventions of Assizes, Sessions, Faires, Markets, and other publike Assemblies, their earnest labouring to sollicit and draw the people to them, and the generall correspondence held amongst them to advance their ends herein. Of these things wee cannot but take notice, and must needs expresse our just feares, that their desires and endeavours are to worke some great change and mutation in the present state of the Church Government, and in the Forme of the publique Worship of God, and Divine Service, and Common Prayers.

Of the Common grievances of the Kingdome, wee as others, have beene and are sensible, and doe professe that wee have just cause with joy and comfort to remember, and with thankefulnesse to acknowledge, the pious care which is already taken for the suppressing of the growth of Popery, the better supply of able and painefull Ministers, and the removing of all Innovation, and wee doubt not but in your great Wisdomes you will regulate the rigour and exorbitancy of the Ecclesiasticall Courts to suit with the temper of our Common Lawes, and the nature and condition of Freemen: And wee hope and humbly pray, that the present Forme of Church Government, and of Church Service, and Common Prayers, now established by the Statutes of this Kingdome shall bee setled, and that all such as shall oppose themselves against the same, or shall doe, or speake any thing in derogation or depraving of the said Divine Service, or Booke of Common Prayer, may without any further tolleration or connivence undergoe the paines, punishment, and forfeitures due therefore; and that such care shall bee taken for placing of Orthodox and peaceable men, Lecturers in all places, whose Doctrine may tend rather to sound instruction and edification, then lead to Schisme and Faction; All which wee humbly submit to your great judgements, and shall

pray to God to assist and direct you from above with his heavenly wisdome, to guide and bring all your consultations to happy conclusions.

To the High and Honourable Court of *Parliament* now sitting.

The humble Petition and Remonstrance, of the Knights, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County of Somerset.

Delivered to the *House of Peers*, by the Lord Marquesse *Hartford*, the 10. of *December*, 1641.

Wee humbly shew;

THat having with griefe of mind heard of sundry Petitions, which have beene exhibited to this Right Honourable Assembly, by some of the Clergy and Laity about *London*, and some Counties, tending to the subversion of the Church-government established in this Kingdome; Weetherefore, tendring the Peace and Welfare of Both, Doe in all humblenesse presume to make knowne our Opinions and Desires concerning the same: Nothing doubting, of the like good acceptance of our humble *Petition* and *Remonstrance* in this behalfe; being tendred with no lesse good Affection to the Peace and Happinesse of the Church, the prosperity of His Sacred Majesty, and this whole Kingdome.

For the present government of the Church, we are most thankefull to God, believing it in our hearts, to be the most pious and the wisest, that any People or Kingdome upon earth, hath beene blest withall since the Apostles dayes: though wee may not deny, but through the frailty of Men, and corruption of Times; some things of ill consequence, and other needlesse, are stollen, or thrust into it; which wee heartily wish may be reformed, and the Church restored to its former Purity. And to the end it may be the better preserved from present and future Innovation; We wish, the wittingly and maliciously guilty, of what condition soever they be (whether Bishops or inferior Clergy) may receive condigne punishment. But, for the miscarriage of Governours, to destroy the Government; we trust it

shall never enter into the hearts of this wise, and Honourable assembly.

Wee will not presume to dispute the Right of *Episcopacy*, whether it be *Divine* or not; It sufficeth us to know, that the *Church-government* by Bishops is ancient, even neere to the Apostles dayes: and that it hath pleased God from time to time, to make them most glorious instruments for the propagation, and preservation of Christian Religion: which with their blood, they have frequently sealed to Posterity. And how much this Kingdome in particular is indebted to them, for their Piety, their Wisedomes, and Sufferings; wee trust shall never be forgotten. Our hearts desire therefore is; That the *Precious* may be separated from the *Vile*; that the bad may be rejected, and the good retayned. Furthermore, having credibly heard, that our *Common Prayer* hath beene interrupted and despised of some mis-understanding or mis-led people, to the great scandall of the Religion professed in our Church; Wee humbly beseech you to take into your care the Redresse therof, as of an Impiety not to be endured: as also to take order for the severe punishment of those men (if they may be discovered) who frequently publish Pamphlets, under a veile of Religion, yet, conducing to confusion and Rebellion.

All which wee humbly offer to your Wisedomes as the thoughts and desires of this *County*. And as wee are perswaded of multitudes of the sound Members of the *Church of England*, and his *Sacred Majesties* most loyall Subjects.

Beseeching God to direct and prosper your Counsels, and yee to pardon our Errors; Wee rest

At your Commands

Knights, Esquires, Divines, Gentlemen, Free-holders; Inhabitants of the County of Somerset, *(none of them Papists, but all Protestants of the* Church *of* England*) and his Majesties loyall Subjects.* } 1435

Whereof, Knights, Esquires, and Gentlemen —— 200
Divines —— 221

Io: BROWNE Cler. Parliament.

To the high and honourable Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the *Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen* and *Houſholders* in the County of RVTLAND; *in behalfe of our ſelves, and our Families.*

And of the Parſons, Vicars *and* Curats *for the Clergy, in behalfe of themſelves and their Families.*

Humbly ſhewing,

THat whereas there have beene divers Petitions exhibited to this Honourable Court, by perſons diſaffected to the preſent Government, for the utter extirpation of the apoſtolicall Government of the *Church* by Biſhops; They by ſedulity, and zeale ſupplying the want of faire pretences for the abolition of that, which wee hope, no juſt reaſon can condemne: and on the otherſide, many pious perſons, true ſonnes of the Church of *England*, have repreſented their juſt deſires of the continuance of it, upon great and weighty cauſes, both in Divinity and true Policy; wee alſo, leſt we might ſeem unconcerned, and for feare leſt our ſilence ſhould be exacted as a crime at our hands if wee be deficient, to what wee are perſwaded is the cauſe of God; In purſuance of their pious intendments, and in allowance of their Reaſons, doe alſo preſſe to your great Tribunal, and begge of you that which is the honour of Kings, to be *Nutricij* of the Church, and her moſt ancient and ſucceſſive Government.

Wee therefore humbly beg of you, to leave us in that ſtate the Apoſtles left the Church in; That the three Ages of Martyrs were governed by; That the thirteene Ages ſince them have alwayes gloried in, (by their Succeſſion of Biſhops from the Apoſtles, proving themſelves members of the Catholike and Apoſtolike Church) that our Lawes have eſtabliſhed, ſo many Kings and Parliaments have protected, into which we were baptized; as certainely Apoſtolicall, as the obſervation of the

Lords

Lords Day, as the distinction of Books Apocryphall from Canonicall, as that such Bookes were written by such Evangelists and Apostles; as the consecration of the Eucharist by Presbyters; as any thing which you will doe by upholding the Government of the Church by Bishops, which we againe and againe, begge of you to doe, having pitty on our Consciences, and not forcing of us to seeke Communion, as yet we know not where. So shall we be bound to pray with a multiplyed Devotion, for the increase of publike, and personall blessings to your Honourably Assembly, to your Noble Persons.

Wee also doe with all Humility begge leave to represent these our Considerations, subjoyned, which wee *hope you will favourably expound to be a well-meant Zeale, and at least, a confidence of duty, and charity to those our Fathers, from whom wee have received, and daily hope to receive, many issues of spirituall Benison.*

1 WEe consider that Christ, either left his Church without a lasting Government, or else Bishops and Presbyters under them are that Government; the former wee feare to say, lest wee might seeme to accuse the Wisdome of the Father, of Improvidence, in the not providing for his Family; the Feeder and the Ruler in Scripture being all one in Office, in expression, in person: So that, if hee left no Rulers, hee left no Feeders; The latter wee are more confident of, for that Christ did clearely institute a disparity in the *Clergy*, (which is the maine Stone of offence) appeares in the Apostles, and seventy two Disciples, to whom, according to the voyce of Christendome, and traditive Interpretation of the Church. Bishops and Presbyters respectively doe succeed; and also many actually did succeed the Apostles in their *Chaires*, being ordained Bishops by the Apostles themselves that did survive, and also beyond all exception that Christ did institute a Government; appeares in those Evangelicall words, (who then is that *Faithfull and wise Steward whom his Lord shall make Ruler over his houshold, &c.*) which Rulers are Bishops, and Priests under them, or else the Church hath beene Apostate from her

her Lord, shee having clearely for fiftcetie hundred yeares had noother Rulers then such.

2. Wee consider that, whether it can be a Church or no without Bishops, is at least a question of great consideration, and the Negative is maintained by Apostolicall, and Primitive men and Martyrs, and by the greatest part of Christendome; and those few (in respect of the whole, that dissent being most certainely, not infallible, to bee sure with Episcopacy, it may be a Church *eatenus*, therefore it is the surest course to retaine it, for feare we separate from the Church, the Pillar and ground of Truth.

3 No Ordination never was without a Bishop, and if any Presbyter did impose hands, unlesse in conjunction with a Bishop, hee was accounted an [I]surper, and anathematized by publike and unquestioned authority; and so without Bishops, no Presbyter, then no absolution, no consecration of the Sacraments of the Lords Supper, and for these wants no man can make a recompence or satisfaction.

4 No Presbyter did ever impose hands on a Bishop, which if so famous a resolve, or publike voice of Christendome may have an estimate, shewes their disparity, and that a Bishop hath a Character, which cannot be imprinted without at least, an equall hand.

Viz. *De jure, non eidem de facto*, till 555 years after Christ, and then but once in the case of Pope *Pelagius*, and that irregularly & never since unlesse by Papall usurpation.

5 VVithout Bishops no Confirmation of Children, and yet confirmation (called in Scripture Imposition of hands) Saint *Paul* in his famous Catechisme accounes a Fundamentall point, and the Church hath alwayes used it, and it was appropriate to Bishops, by the laudable custome of Christendome, and by the example of the Apostles, in the case of the *Samaritane* Christians, whom *Philip* the Evangelist had converted, and is charged upon the Parents of Children, that they bring their children to Bishops to be confirmed, and it was never otherwise, but just as in the case of Ordination, (*videlicet*) by singularity and usurpation, till of late that the Iesuits to enlarge their *Philacteries*, have striven to make Bishops not necessary, by communicating Confirmation to the Priests of their Order.

6 To take away Bishops, is against the Wisdome of the State of *England*, ever since the Reformation, and having beene attempted by clancular practises, was checked by the Princes respectively, and their Councell, and confidently, by the wisdome of preceeding Parliaments, and this although the Bishops then were lesse learned, and as much infamed.

7 We are sure that Episcopall Government hath consisted with Monarchy, ever since the *English* Monarchy was [Christian, & we are] to try whether any innovated Government can or will,

8 Wee consider, that if it could consist with Monarchy, when it was byassed by the Popes prevalent incroachment, much more since the Reformation, when the King hath the raines in his owne hand, and can give them Lawes, and ascertaines them by their immediate dependance, both for their Baronies, and Election, and personall Iurisdiction on the Crowne, and by the Statute of Submission.

9 Wee consider that Saint *Hierome* (pretented as the maine Authenticke enemy against Episcopacy) yet sayes, That Bishops were constituted as an antidote and deletory to dis-improve the issues of Schisme, and that by the Apostles, who best knew the remedies. And now that Schismes multiply, there is more need of Bishops, so that they cannot be taken away, upon pretence their Regiment is not necessary, for the taking them away makes them more necessary by the multiplication of Schismes.

Comment in Epist. ad Titum.

10 All Learning will be discountenanced, if not extinguished, upon the demolition of Episcopacy, the Bishops being parties for the advancement of Learning; and on the other side, if the Government should be in the hands of Presbitery, or lay Elders, we know no reason sufficient to stifle our feares, lest preferment be given to people unlearned and unfit to have the mannaging of Soules, especially, since a learned *Clergy* will be suspected by their Lay-Elders, as too knowing to be ruled by their Dictates, which will not have so much artifice and fineneſse, as to command by strength of reason: which our feares are also increased, by considering that by the multiplication of Lay-Elders, or other Governours, their personall interest being increased partiality must be more frequent, and all this is besides their incompetency of judging the abilities of Schollers.

11 The removeall of Bishops would be a scandall, not onely to many weake Christians, who feare all Innovation, as guilty of some ill intendments upon their consciences, but also to the strongest, which shewes it to be the fault of the giver, not the weakneſse of the receiver; and if we must not scandalize our weake brethren, much leſse our strong; since this will intrench upon us in a high measure, they not being apt to be scandalized upon umbrages, and impertinencies.

12 Where Bishops are not, there is not an Honourable, but Familike Clergy, against the Apostolicall rule of double honour.

13 By putting downe Episcopacy, wee deprive our selves of those solemne benedictions, which the Faith of Christendome, and the profession of the *Church of England*, enjoyning the Bishop rather so pronounce the blessing at the end of the Communion, appropriates to Episcopall preheminence above Priestly authority.

14 Two parts of three of the Reformed Churches are governed by Bishops, or Superintendents (which is properly the Latine word of Bishops) and the other part that wants them, have often wished them, as their owne Doctors doe professe.

15 It is against the liberties of the Clergy, indulged to them by the *Magna Charta*, granted and confirmed by so many Kings, and about thirty Parliaments in expresse act, and the violation of any part of it by intrenchment upon the right of the lay Subject, justly accounted a great grievance, the Charter it selfe being as Fundamentall a Law (as we conceive) as any other, and any of us may feare lest his Liberties may be next in question.

16 The foure great Generall *Councels*, in estimation next the foure *Evangelists*, and by the Statutes of the Kingdome, made the rules of judging Heresies, were held by Bishops, the greatest fires and pests of Christendome, the old Heresies, were by their Industry extinct; Church Discipline, and pious constitutions by them established, many Nations by them converted, many Miracles done for the confirmation of *Christian Faith*, one of the Gospels written by a Bishop (Saint *Marke* of *Alexandria*) if wee beleeve as authentike Records, as any are extant; Three Epistles of Saint *Paul* written to Bishops; Seven Epistles by the Holy Ghost himselfe, recorded in the *Revelation*, and sent to seven *Asian* Bishops, as all ancient Fathers accord; the names of twelve men, beside Apostles, mentioned in Holy Scripture, which all antiquity reports to have beene Bishops; Most of the Fathers, whose workes all Posterity embraces with much zeale and admiration, were Bishops; these also in our apprehensions advance that holy Function, to a high and unalterable estimate.

Timotheus.
Titus.
Clemens.
Linus.
Marcus.
Dyonysius.
Onesimus.
Caius.
Epaphroditus.
Iacobus Hierosolimit.
Evodius.
Simeon.

17 Very many of the faire Churches and Colledges, and places of Religion, were built by Bishops; which are faire Caracters to shew their promptnesse to doe publike acts of Piety, and that persons so qualified as they were, that is, Governours and Clergy, and fairly endowed, is an excellent composition to advance publike designes for the honour of God in the Promotion of publike Piety.

18 Since it hath pleased this Honourable Court, of late to commend a Protestation to us, which we by solemne Vow engaged our selves to attest with our lives and fortunes, the established Doctrine of the Church of *England*, wee consider, that since the 36. article hath approved and established the booke of *Consecration* of Bishops; the abolition of Episcopacy would nullifie that article, and should not we make humble Remonstrance to the contrary, we should suddenly

recede from our great and solemne Protestation for maintenance of our *Church* Doctrine.

But may it please this Honourable Assembly, wee consider on the other side.

19 The introducing of Lay Elders, must needs bring an insupportable burthen to all Parishes, by maintaining them at the Parish charge (for they must bee maintained, or else a transgression is made against an Apostolicall Rule. For the principall, and indeed the onely colourable pretended place for Lay Elders, injoynes their maintenance: So that, either the people must bee oppressed with so great burthens, or else Saint *Pauls* Rule not obeyed, or else there is no authority for Lay Elders, as indeed there is not.

20 And also there can bee no lesse feare of Vsurpation upon the Temporall power by the Presbitery, then is pretended from Episcopacy, since that Presbitery challenges cognisance of more causes and persons, then the Episcopacy does, (so making a dangerous entrenchment upon the Supremacy) and derives its pretence from Divine Institution, with more confidence, and more immediate derivation then Episcopacy, though indeed most vainely as wee conceive.

21 Wee crave leave also to adde this, that these two (*viz.*) Episcopacy and Presbitery being the onely two in contestation, if any new designe should justle Episcopacy, wee are confident that as it hitherto wants a name, so it will want a face, or forme of reason (in case of Conscience) when it shall appeare.

Signed by Knights, Justices, Gentry, and Free-holders, about } 300.

By Ministers, about the number of 40.

The

The *Cheshire* Petition for establishing of the Common-Prayer-Booke, and Suppression of Schismatiques, presented to the Kings Majesty, and from him recommended to the House of Peeres, by the Lord KEEPER.

To the Kings most Excellent Majesty, and to the Right Honourable the Lords, and the Honourable the House of Commons Assembled in *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of divers of the Nobility, Justices, Gentry, Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the County Palatine *of* Chester, *whose Names are nominated in the Schedule annexed.*

YOur Petitioners withall cheerefulnesse and contentation, affying in the happy settlement of the distractions both of Church *and State, by His Majesties pious care, and the prudent and religious endeavours of this Honourable Assembly, and with due humility and obedience submitting to the unanimous conclusions thereof, yet conceive themselves bound in Duty.*

HVmbly to represent to your mature considerations, that the present disorders of many turbulent and ill disposed Spirits, are such, as give not onely occasion of present discontent to your Petitioners, but seeme to import some ill event without early prevention.

The pure seed of our Faith (the Doctrine of the true Reformed Protestant Religion) established by so many Acts of Parliament, and so harmoniously concurring with the confessions of all other Reformed Churches, being tainted with the Tares of divers Sects and Schismes lately sprung up amongst us.

Our pious, laudable, and ancient forme of Divine Service, composed by the holy Martyrs, and worthy Instruments of Reformation established by the prudent Sages of State (your religious Predecessours) honoured by the approbation of many learned forraigne Divines, subscribed by the Ministery of the whole Kingdome, and with such generall content received by all the Laity, that scarse any Fa-

mily or person that can read, but are furnished with the Bookes of Common Prayer: In the conscionable use whereof many Christian hearts have found unspeakable joy and comfort, wherein the famous Church of *England*, our deare Mother, hath just cause to glory; And may shee long flourish in the practise of so blessed a *Liturgy*; yet it is now, not onely depraved by many of those who should teach conformity to established Lawes, but in contempt thereof in many places wholly neglected. All these dayly practised, with confidence, without punishment: To the great dejection of many sound Protestants, and occasioning so great insultation and rejoycing in some Separatists, as they not onely seeme to portend, but menace some great alteration; And not containing themselves within the bounds of Civill Government, doe commit many tumultuous, (if not Sacrilegious) violences both by day and night upon divers Churches.

Therefore your Petitioners being all very apprehensive of the dangerous consequences of Innovation, and much scandalized at the present disorders,

Doe all unanimously pray,

That there bee admitted no Innovation of Doctrine or Liturgy, that holy publike Service being so fast rooted by a long setled continuance in this Church, that in our Opinion and Judgements it cannot bee altered (unlesse by the advice and consent of some Nationall Synode) without an universall discontent. And that some speedy course bee taken to suppresse such Schismatiques and Separatists, whose factious Spirits doe evidently endanger the peace both of Church and State.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

The Petition signed by Lords, Knights, Justices of the Peace, and Esquires:	94.
By Gentlemen of quality,	440.
By Divines,	86.
By Freeholders and others, in all;	8936.

To

To the *Kings* Most Excellent *Majesty*, And to the High Court of *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of Colledges *and* Halls, *and others, well-willers to Piety and Learning, throughout the Kingdome of* England.

Sheweth,

THat whereas many Persons dis-affected to the present forme of Government of the Church of *England* (establisht not onely by the Ecclesiasticall, but also by the Common Law of this Realme, and diverse Acts of Parliament) have of late in great multitudes petitioned this Honourable Court against the Orders, Honour, Iurisdiction, and meanes of the Clergy; And have publisht such their desires in print, and Pulpit, and dayly seeke to advance and propagate the same: To the great disheartning of all Learning, (if such designes find favour) the grievous scandall of the Reformed Religion as unstable, and the unspeakeable advantage of our Enemies of *Rome*.

WEe therefore (well weighing, that the Seminaries must decay when the Garden shall bee wasted) in all humility most heartely pray Your Majesty, and this Honourable Court, that all the Orders of Holy Church, of Bishops, Priests, and Decons, which from the Apostles times till these, have withstood so many Practices, may have yet hopes to flourish under Your gracious Protection. And that by your assistance, under our most Religious Soveraigne, the ancient Catholique Faith, and Discipline, as also the devout and decent service of God, in our Church Liturgy, may bee defended from all Innovations, and Novelties: The meanes and liberties of the Churches, as well Cathedrall, and Collegeat, as Parochiall, to them hitherto of right belonging, according to the pious Wills of their blessed Founders, may bee continued and preserved: Many thousand Families which on them depend, secured from ruine: And that our Nation, whose Lawes already favour as much as any in the World, the right of the First borne, may retaine Ecclesiasticall promotions, as the Patrimony of younger Children, the prize of labour and study, an incitement of learning, and a reward of those that can intitle themselves thereto by, honest desert, *And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.*

This

This Petition is subscribed, generally by all the Doctors, Masters, *and* Batchelours *of all Degrees and Faculties in the Universitie of* Oxford; *And by very many other persons of quality:* Baronets, Knights, Esquires, Ministers, *and* Gentlemen, *within the Counties of* Oxford, Berks, Wilts, South-hampton, Dorset, Kent, Surrey, Westmerland, Cumberland, *and other Shires.*

Devonshire Petition.

To the Right Honourable the Lords *Spirituall* and *Temporall*, now assembled in the House of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Information and Petition, of the Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, and others of ability, within the Diocesse of Exeter,

VVEe whose Names are underwritten, have for these many yeares, found the benefit and comfort of *Episcopall Government*, under which wee have lived hitherto peaceably, and happily, with great freedome and frequency of the Preaching of the Gospell, and incouragement of the conscionable and painefull Preachers thereof. As wee blesse God for his favour to us in the behalfe, So wee doe humbly and earnestly professe our desire that the same Government may bee still continued both to us, and our posterity, submitting all personall offences, and redresse of abuses to your Honourable Wisdomes.

In witnesse whereof wee have hereunto subscribed.

Signed by Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, and other Inhabitants, neere upon *Eight thousand.*

The

The Staffordshire Petition.

To the Right Honourable the LORDS, and COMMONS assembled in the High Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the *Knights, Gentlemen, Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of* STAFFORD, *hereunto subscribed.*

Who Most humbly pray,

THat the present publique forme of Gods Worship, and administration of the blessed Sacrament, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and purest antiquity, which hath beene formerly, sundry times established by godly Acts of Parliament, may now againe in these broken and troubled times, bee to Gods glory, and the Churches Peace, re-established, and confirmed.

That Episcopacy being the ancientest, and Primitive Government of the Church, renowned for successes, victorious against Schismes, and Heresies, and especially of late yeares, against that *Hydra* of Heresies, the *Roman* Papacy, glorious for ancient and late Martyrdomes, happy before the corruption of Popery, and since the Reformation in the Plantation, and Preservation of Truth, and Peace; eminently serviceable to this Common-wealth, most compliable with the Civill Government (into the Fabrick, and body of which it is riveted, and incorporate) & most apt & easie at all times by the State to be reduced into Order, may for the future, as formerly, by your Great Authority bee continued, and maintained for the glory of God, preservation of Order, Peace, and Vnity, the Reformation and suppression of wickednesse and vice, and the mature prevention of Schismes, Factions, and Seditions. The which wee, your humble Petitioners, the more earnestly beseech your Honours to grant, For that strong feare doe possesse our hearts, that the sudden mutation of a Government so long setled, so well knowne, and approved, cannot recompence with any proportionable utility, the disturbances, and disorders which it may worke by novelty, being most confident, in your Honours, Wisdome, and Iustice; That all excessive exorbitances, and incroachments,

which shall bee found issuing, not from any poison in the nature of the Discipline, but rather from the infirmity, or corruption of the person (unto which the very best Government is subject, shall bee duely regulated, and corrected.

And your Petitioners shall duly pray for your Honours happiest proceedings.

Subscribed by 3000. of the best quality of the County.

To the *Kings* Most Excellent *Majesty*, And to the Right Honourable the LORDS, and the Honourable the House of COMMONS assembled in PARLIAMENT.

The most humble Petition of divers *Baronets, Knights, Iustices, Gentry, Ministers, and Freeholders, Inhabitants of the County of* KENT, *within the Diocesse of* CANTERBURY.

Most humbly shewing,

THat notwithstanding this Kingdome, hath by the singular providence of Almighty God, for many yeares last past, happily flourished, above all other Nations in the Christian World, under the Religion and Government by Law established: Yet hath it beene of late most miserably distracted through the sinister practises of some private persons ill affected to them both.

By whose meanes the present Government is disgraced and traduced, The Houses of God are prophaned, and in part defaced, The Ministers of Christ are contemned and despised, The Ornaments, and many Vtensils of the Church are abused, The Liturgy and Booke of Common Prayer depraved, and neglected, That absolute modell of Prayer, *The Lords Prayer*, vilified, The Sacraments of the Gospell in some places unduly administred, in other places omitted, Solemne dayes of fasting observed, and appointed by private persons, Marriages illegally Solemnized, Burials uncharitably performed, And the very Fundamentall of our Religion subverted, by the publication of a new Creed, and teaching the abrogation of the Morall Law.

For

For which purpose, many offensive Sermons are dayly Preached, and many impious Pamphlets printed, and in contempt of authority, Many doe what seemeth good in their owne eyes, onely as if there were no King, nor Government, in this our *Israel*.

Whereby Almighty God is highly provoked, his sacred Majesty dishonoured, The peace of the Kingdome endangered, The Consciences of the people disquieted, The Ministers of Gods Word disheartned, and the Enemies of the Church emboldned in their enterprises.

For redresse whereof, May it please this Great and Honourable Councell, speedily to command a due observation of the Religion and Government, by Law established; in such manner, as it may seeme best to the Piety and Wisdome of his Royall Majesty, and this Honourable Court.

Your Petitioners as they shall Confidently expect a blessing from Heaven upon this Church and Kingdome, So shall they have this further cause to implore the Divine Assistance upon this Most Honourable Assembly.

Subscribed by

Knight Barronets, and Knights	24.
Esquires and Gentlemen of note, above	300.
Divines	108.
Freeholders, and Subsidie men	800.

All within the Dioceſſe of *Canterbury*.

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the House of *Commons* assembled in *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of the Gentry, Clergy, *and other Inhabitants, subscribed, of the Counties of* Flint, Denbigh, Mountgomery, Carnarvan, Angleſey, Merioneth, *being the sixe Shires* of Northwales.

As it was presented this present March *the* 5. 1641. *Accompanied with thirty thousand hands.*

WHereas the present condition of the Church of *England* (in the publike Liturgy thereof, in the ancient liberties and

 forme

forme of Government, as they doe now ſtand eſtabliſhed by Law) hath beene lately brought in queſtion, and manifold Petitions from the ſeverall quarters of this Kingdome, and other ſuch like addreſſes concerning the ſame, have beene preſented to this Honourable Houſe.

Wee his Majeſties faithfull Subjects in the Principalities and Counties of *North-wales* whom it equally concerneth, and as ſtrongly tied in duty and conſcience, doe likewiſe preſume to make our humble Remonſtrance, and wee doe it after a long ſilence and expectation, joyned with ſome feares.

And firſt, for thoſe things which concerne the publique Service of God, as they bee of neereſt importance, and wee nothing doubt, but you will take unto your tendreſt thoughts, ſo wee doe earneſtly propound and proſtrate before you that dangerous conſequence of Innovation in matters of ſo high concernment, as wee conceive, and leave it to your owne great Wiſdomes to Iudge, what ſcruples and jealouſies are like to ariſe, if wee bee taught a new and different way of ſerving God after a full perſwaſion of the lawfulneſſe of that which is preſcribed according to the Word of God, not without the deliberate, and concurrent approbation and induſtry of the moſt learned of the Proteſtant Church, of this and other Nations, and the poſſeſſion of ſo many yeares in the practiſe thereof, and all ſince the bleſſed time of Reformation.

The meere report hereof hath already produced no good effect, breeding in the minds of ill-diſpoſed perſons Inſolence and contempt, in others perplexity and griefe, not knowing how to ſettle themſelves, or forme their obedience in ſuch diſtractions, and ſometimes repugnancy of commands.

Then for the outward policy and forme of Government, under the Iuriſdiction of Biſhops, bounded by Law, and kept within their owne limits.

It is as wee beleeve, that forme which came into this *Iſland*, with the firſt Plantation of Religion heere, and God ſo bleſt this *Iſland*, that Religion came early in, with the firſt dawning of the day, very neere, or in the time of the Apoſtles themſelves. And in the ſucceſſion of all after Ages, the ſame hath beene conſtantly maintained among us, and that without any eminent interruption, or gainſaying, even till theſe our dayes.

And now from the comfortable experience which wee feele, and which our Fathers have told us, of the conveniency and moderation

of

of this Government, together with the antiquity of the same (a strong argument of Gods speciall Protection.) Wee doe in all humility represent, and pray that the same may be still preserved entire in all the parts thereof, professing yet withall, that wee heartily disclaime all scandalous Innovation, and Popish corruption whatsoever.

And we are the more incouraged in this suit, because wee find it to be the unanimous and undevided request and vote of this whole Country, who cannot without some trembling entertaine a thought of change. In all which we doe not presume to give any rules, but as it becomes us, humbly declare and open our owne breasts, and labour to deliver our owne soules in testimony of our loyalties, and discharge of our Consciences, who shall ever take comfort to find the same way of honouring God, continued in his owne House of Prayer, the lawes of the land put to actuall execution, the Peace and Government of the Church preserved, the rumor'd alterations declined, and the distractions already too visible arising thereupon avoyded.

And as wee doubt not but your great Wisdomes will take care that our Doctrine and Discipline established, shall be still in force, and observed, untill by some absolute law, and the opinions of learned Convocations, or Synod (according to the Customs of our prudent fore-Fathers in best times) it be otherwise ordained.

So shall wee never cease to pray for a permanent blessing upon your Counsels and Resolutions, to the generall happinesse of Church and Kingdome.

To the sacred MAIESTIE, of our most Gracious Soveraigne Lord, King CHARLES; by the grace of God, of *England, Scotland, France*, and *Ireland*, KING: *Defender of the Faith.*

The humble Gratulation and Petition of divers, His Majesties faithfull Subjects (of the true Protestant Religion) within the County Palatine *of* Lancaster.

Most gracious Soveraigne,

THe most Reall and convincing'st testimonies of your Princely care, for the advancement of Gods true Religion in your Ma-

Jesties Realmes: And the common good of all your Subjects. Could no lesse then draw from us (who have hitherto in these stirring Times sate still) this humble acknowledgement of our due and necessary thankes.

Wee with the inmost and choicest thoughts of our soules, doe esteeme and prize your Majesties most righteous intentions, of governing your liege people, according to the wholsome Lawes of this Kingdome. A thing so often, and with such earnestnesse avowed by your sacred Majesty, whereunto we yeeld that hearty credence, which is due to so religious a Prince. Wee doe also with all humility and thankfulnesse acknowledge your manifold and evident manifestations, (to the world) that you affect not an Arbitrary Government, But the common prosperity, and happinesse of all your loyall subjects: by your readines to joyn with your Parliament in speedy raysing of forces for a timely suppression, of that odious Rebellion in *Ireland*, by your late Proclamation for the putting in due execution the Lawes against Papists. By your most gracious condiscending to the desires of your Great Councell, in signing the Bill for the triennial Parliament, for the relinquishing your Title of imposing upon Merchandize, and power of pressing souldiers. For the taking away the Star-chamber: and High Commission Courts, for regulating of the Councell Table, As also for the Bils for the Forrests and Stannerie Courts, with other most necessary acts. Moreover, wee are confident, and well assured of your Majesties zeale, for the advancement of the true Protestant Religion. And with inexpressible joy doe understand your most Christian and pious resolution, for the preservation of those powerfull encouragements of Industry, Learning, and Piety, the meanes and honour of the Ministry, for the maintenance and continuance of our Church Government, and solemne Liturgy of the Church, of long continuance, and generall approbation of the most pious and learned of this Nation, and of other countries: Composed (according to the Primitive Patterne) by our blessed Martyrs, and other religious and learned men. As also your gracious pleasure, that all abuses of Church and State shall bee reformed, according to the modell of Queene *Elizabeths* dayes, (of ever blessed and famous memory.) By the one you have weakned the hopes of the sacrilegious devourers of the Churches Patrimony (if there be any such:) And by the other provided against all Popish Impieties and Idolatries: and also against the growing danger of *Anabaptists*, *Brownists*, and other *Novelists*. All which Piety, Love, and Iustice, wee beseech God to

returne

returne into your Royall bosome. But yet most gracious Soveraigne, there is one thing that sads our hearts, and hinders the perfection of our happinesse, which is the distance and mis-understanding between your Majesty and your Parliament, whereby the hearts of your subjects are filled with feares and jealousies (Iustice neglected, sacred ordinances prophaned, and Trading impaired, to the impoverishing of many of your liege people. For the Removall whereof wee cannot find out any lawfull meanes without your Majesties assistance and direction.

Wherefore we humbly beseech your most excellent Majesty, to continue your most Christian and pious Resolution of ruling your people, according to the Lawes of the Land, and maintaining of the same, of being a zealous Defender of the established Doctrine, Liturgie, and Government of our Church from heresies, Libertinisme, and prophannesse; an advancer of Learning, Piety, and Religion; an Encourager of Learned, Painefull, Orthodox Preachers. And whatsoever your Parliament shall offer to your Royall view, conducing to this blessed end, the common good and tranquillity of your subjects, to be pleased to condiscend unto, and graciously to confirme, and withall to declare unto us some expedient way, how we may make a dutifull addresse unto your Parliament, for the taking away of these differences and impediments, which stay the happy proceedings (of that most honourable Assembly, whereof your Majesty is the Head) which once removed, wee doubt not, but you will bee as neare your Parliament in Person, as in affection. That there may be a blessed harmony, betwixt your Highnesse, and that great Councell, wee shall with all alacrity observe the same. Humbly rendring our lives, and fortunes for the preservation of your Royall Person, Crowne, and Dignity, according to our bounden duty, and allegiance. And heartily praying for your Majesties long and prosperous Raigne over us.

Wee the Subscribers of this Petition, doe hereby give authority unto the Bearers hereof, to put our names to such Transcript hereof, as shall be presented to His Majesty.

Attested by Knights and Esquires 64. *Divines* 55. *Gentlemen* 740. *Free-holders neare* 7000.

To

To the Kings most Excellent MAIESTIE.

The humble Petition of the County of Cornewall.

WEe your Majesties loyall subjects, In all duty render unto your Majesty all thankfulnesse, for your Majesties unexampled favour, and grace in granting unto your Subjects (in concurrence with your Parliament) such Lawes and Freedomes, which have most fully expressed your Majesties Gracious Goodnesse unto your people, And wee most thankfully receive your Majesties free offer of a generall pardon, whereof wee most humbly desire to be made Partakers. And wee most humbly beseech your Majesty never to suffer your Subjects to be governed by an arbitrary Government, nor admit an alteration in Religion. And your Petitioners being most feelingly grieved for your Majesties discontents: partly occationed by divers scandalous Pamphlets; and no way lessened by seditious Sermons: Doe wish a confluence of all comforts, honour, and happinesse unto your Majesty: and doe heartily pray for the reconcilement betwixt your Majesty and your Parliament. And in all thankfulnesse for your Majesties said Grace and Goodnesse, your Petitioners doe offer themselves most ready to maintaine, and defend with their lives, and fortunes, your Maiesties sacred Person, Honour and Estate: And lawfull Prerogative against all persons whatsoever, according to the oaths of allegeance and Supremacy. *May* 22. 1642.

Indorsed,

Wee the Petitioners to this Petition, doe constitute, and appoint Peter Courtney, Walter Langdon, Benatus Bellot, *and* Nevill Bligh, *Esquires, to deliver this Petition, in the name of the county of Cornwall to His sacred Majesty.*

TO

To the Honourable Houſe of Commons, aſſembled in Parliament.

The Humble Petition of the Gentry, Miniſters, and Commonalty of the County of Kent, *agreed upon, at the generall Aſsizes of the County.*

Moſt Humbly ſheweth,

THat wee cannot but take notice, how welcome to this Honourable Houſe, many Petitions have beene, which yet came not from an aſſembled body of any county (as this doth) wee doe therefore hope to find as gentle and favourable a reception of this, as any other have found of their Petitions, our hearts witneſſing unto us, as good, peaceable, and pious purpoſes as the beſt.

Theſe are therefore the true and Ardent deſires of this County.

1. That you will be pleaſed to accept our due, and hearty thankes for thoſe excellent Lawes (which by his Majeſties grace and goodneſſe) you have obtained for us.

2. That all Lawes againſt Papiſts be put in due execution, and an account taken of their diſarming, and that all children of the Papiſts may be brought up in the reformed Religion.

3. That the ſolemn *Liturgy* of the Church of *England* (Celebrious by the piety of the Biſhops and Martyrs who compoſed it) eſtabliſht by the ſupreame Lawes of this Land, atteſted and approved by the beſt of all Forraigne Divines, confirmed by the ſubſcription of all the Miniſtry of this Land, a Clergy as able and Learned as any in the Chriſtian world ere injoyed, and with a holy Love embraced by the moſt and beſt of all the Laity, that this holy exerciſe of Religion may by your authority be injoyed quiet and free from interruptions, ſcornes, prophaneneſſe, threats and force of ſuch men, who daily doe deprave it, and neglect the uſe of it in divers Churches, in deſpight of the Lawes eſtabliſhed.

4. That Episcopall Government, as ancient in this Iland as Christianity it selfe, deduced and dispersed throughout the Christian World, even from the Apostlicall times, may bee preserved (as the most pious, most prudent, and most safe Government) for the peace of the Church.

5. That all differences concerning Religion and Ceremonies, may be referred to a lawfull free, and National Synod, as your Remonstrance promiseth, to a generall Synod of most grave, learned, pious and Iudicious Divines, (the proper agents) whose interests, gifts, and callings, may quicken them in that great Worke, whose choyce to be by all the Clergy of the Land, because all the Clergy are to bee bound by their Resolutions, and the determination of this Synod to bind us all, when you have first formed them into a Law, and this we take to be according to the ancient and fundamentall Law of this Land, confirmed by *Magna Charta*.

6. That some speedy and good provision may be made (as by his Majesty hath beene, and is by all good men desired) against the odious and abominable scandall of schismaticall and seditious Sermons and Pamphlets, and some severe Law made against Lay-men, for daring to arrogate to themselves, and to execute the holy function of the Ministry, who (some of them) doe sow their impious and discontented Doctrine even in sacred places, by abuse of sacred Ordinances, to the advancing of Heresie, Schisme, Prophaneness, Libertinisme, Anabaptisme, and Atheisme.

7. That if the coertive power of Ecclesiasticall Courts by way of Excommunication be already abrogated, or shall be thought fit so to be, that there be some other power & authority speedily established, for suppressing the heynous, and now so much abounding sins of Incest, Adultery, and Fornication, and other crimes, and for recovering Tythes, repayring of Churches, Probate of Wils, Church assesses, providing Bread and Wine for the Communion, and choyce of Church-Wardens, and other Officers in the Church, and especially for Ministers, who neglect the Celebrating of the Holy Communion, and the Parishioners for not Receiving.

8. That the Professors of that Learned faculty of the Civill Law, and (without which this Kingdome cannot but suffer manifold Inconveniences) may not find discouragements, and so divert their studies and Professions.

9. That honour and profits the powerfull encouragements of Industry, Learning, and Piety, may be preserved without further diminution to the Clergy.

10 That

10. That you please sadly to consider the bleeding wounds of our Brethren in *Ireland*, and with speedy succours endeavour to preserve them, whereunto his Majesty hath promised a gracious concurrence.

11. That you will please to frame an especiall Law for the Regulating of the *Militia* of this Kingdome, so that the Subject may know how at once to obey, both his Majesty, and both Houses of Parliament, a Law whereby may bee left to the discretion of Governours, as little as may bee, but that the number of Armes, and what measure of punishment shall bee inflicted upon the offendours, may bee expresly set downe in the Act, and not left to any Arbitrary power, and that according to the president of former Lawes, the offendours may not bee tried out of the County.

12. That the precious liberty of the Subject (the Common birthright of every *English man*) may bee as in all these points preserved entire, so in this also, that no order of either of both Houses, not grounded on the Lawes of this Land, may be enforced on the Subject, till it bee fully enacted by Parliament.

13. That his Majesties gracious Message of the 20. of *Jan.* last, for the present and future establishment of the Priviledges of Parliament, the free enjoying of our estates and Fortunes, the Liberty of our persons, the security of the true Religion professed, the maintaining of his Majesties just and Regall Authority, the establishing his Revenue, may bee taken into speedy consideration, the effecting whereof will satisfie the desires of all us, his faithfull and loving Subjects.

14. That all possible care may bee taken, that the Native Commodities of this Kingdome, may have a quick Vent, and that Cloathing, and other Manufactures may bee improved, wherein the livelihood of many thousands doe consist, and that Trade may bee ballanced, that the importation doe not exceed the exportation, otherwise it will prove a consumption of the Land.

15. That you please to frame some Lawes concerning Depopulations, Purveyances, Cart-taking, delayes in Iustice, Traffick, Fishing in the Coasts, Fulling earth, that our Sea Forts may bee repaired, and our Magazines renewed.

16. That you please to consider the generall poverty that seemes to overgrow this Kingdome.

17. Lastly, Wee humbly beseech you to consider the sad condition, that wee and the whole Land are in, if a good understanding

bee not speedily renewed betweene his Majesty, and both Houses of Parliament.

Our hopes are yet above our feares, feeare them wee beseech you, God direct and guide your consultations for the removing of all distrusts and Iealousies, for the retuing that tye of confidence and trust, (which is the highest happinesse) betweene our gracious Prince, and his loving Subjects.

And y'u shall have the dayly prayers of your humble Oratours of the Commonalty of Kent.

To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses of the House of *Commons* assembled in *Parliament*.

The humble Petition of the Baronets, Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Clergy-men, Free-holders, Subsidy-men, *and others of good Rank, and Quality in the County of* OXFORD.

Agreed upon, and subscribed, at the times of their meetings to take the Protestation sent unto them.

Humbly shewing,

THat whereas some *Petitions* have beene exposed, in print, the common view under the names of the *Knights, Gentlemen, Freeholders, Subsidy-men, of the best Ranke and Quality of the County of Oxford*, as preferred to the Honourable House of *Parliament*.

Wee doe hereby crave leave, to shew to this Honourable House, that such Petitions *have not received* Publique Examination *among us, at any Generall meeting directed by* Authority, *for the service of the* County.

AND wee your now *Petitioners*, knowing our selves to bee to *Major part* of those degrees within this County, and as desirous to expresse our Gratitude in this Honourable House, for your unwearied labours, and the happy effects thereof, for the good of this Land and

and State, doe hereby offer up in all Humility, the greatest expression of our Thankefulnesse: And in like manner, our unanimous desires.

That the *Government* of this *Church* may continue, as is now by Law established: And that the *Liturgy* may bee setled with such alterations (if there bee cause) as your Wisdomes shall approve.

That the Lawes against *Papists* which oppose our *Religion*, And against *Sectaries* (of late dangerously encreased among us) that trouble the *Peace* thereof, may bee put in full execution: And where those Lawes are defective, such further remedy therein may bee provided, as to your wisdomes shall seeme fit.

That a free *Synod* of *Orthodox* and peaceable *Divines* may bee convened, according to the forme of the *Primitive*, and Purest times of *Christianity*, for composing of all differences in *Doctrine*, and *Ceremonies* of *Religion*.

That the Safety of this County and Kingdome may bee provided for, by the disposing of such a *Militia*, as may consist with the native *Liberties* of the *Subject*.

That you would bee pleased to continue your Care in hastening the further Reliese of our distressed Brethren in *Ireland*.

And your *Petitioners* shall bee ready to maintaine, with their *Lives* and *Estates*, his *Majesties* Person, Honour, and Estate, together with the Rights and Priviledges of *Parliament*.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

To the Most Honourable and High Court of PARLIAMENT:

The humble Petition of the Gentlemen, *and other of the Inhabitants of the County of* Cornwall.

HAving seene and heard the many (though scarce divers) Petitions to this Honourable Assembly, by the Inhabitants of divers Counties and Cities of this Land, as also Corporations, Companies, and Trades, some against Bishops, some against the Common Prayer, and all against such Judiciall, and things Super-elementary to the re-

gion of their capacity of judging, and matters onely belonging to the Iudicature of this grave *Synod*, which seemes either to distrust, or direct, or both, your great Wisdomes; Wee therefore the Gentlemen, and other the Inhabitants of *Cornwall*, with as many hearts, though not hands, with as many good willes, though not persons, not in imitation, but rather by provocation and necessity, in these times, to shew our good minded affections, doe humbly prostrate the utmost of our service to your feet. In which (or rather after which) wee take leave humbly to begge.

THat you will bee pleased to bend your auxiliary and good affections to the redresse of the distresse of the miserable Protestants in *Ireland*. To gaine whose good, prosperity, peace, and tranquility, to preserve the Soveraignty of that Land to our Royall King, and to maintaine His, and this Kingdomes Honour, We shall willingly lay downe our lives and fortunes.

That you will bee pleased to continue your great respect, dutifull love, and true obedience, to our Royall Soveraigne, by maintaining his just, and no way Antilegall Prerogative.

That you will bee pleased to put the Lawes in due execution against all Iesuites, Seminaries, Papists, and Recusants.

That you will bee pleased to looke upon the other side, and duly weighing the actions (or rather factions) of some, (whom most men call Citizens) to scourge their irregular and disorderly Schisme, and Hereticall Sects, into right paths of serving God, to frequent his House, and to Pray as well as Heare, to allow Order, and obey Conformity, to reverence Learning, and bow to Authority, to bee under a Discipline, and live in order.

That you will bee pleased to maintaine and establish the Ancient, Fundamentall, and most venerable Lawes, Order, and Discipline, both of our Church and Common-wealth, to continue the reverenced Office, and punish the offending persons of Bishops, to have in high account, and eternize (as farre as in you lies) the Divine and excellent forme of Common-prayer, to correct braine-forg'd doctrine, by your examplary precepts strike a Reverence of Gods House into every mans breast.

That you will bee pleased to intimate to the people, your Honourable and wise intentions concerning Divine Service, lest while you hold your peace, some rejecting it in part, others altogether, they vainly conceive you countenance them.

Lastly,

Lastly, (not to trouble your great affaires any longer) That you will bee pleased to take into your Sage consideration, those Scandalous and ill-affected Pamphlets, which fly abroad in such swarmes, as are able to cloud the pure aire of Truth, and present a darke ignorance to those who have not the two wings of Iustice and Knowledge to fly above them.

Now to polish this our worke with a smooth demonstration of our modest intents, that the tinctures which in Introduction fell on the fore-mentioned presents, may slide without a staine from this; Wee doe in all humility declare, that neither distrust of your intentions, nor opinion of any of our Counsels worthy your cares, ever tainted our thoughts, but that wee have still beene, and are confident, that this most wise *Synod* hath ever thought fit, resolv'd, and will confirme into action, what wee now humbly request; therefore this our present, not so much a Petition, as a Prayer of willing and thankefull hearts for the hoped sequell, is onely to shew our true intentions and good will towards his gracious Majesty, and this High Court, as Instruments of the peace of our soules and bodies, for which wee are unanimously, and immutably resolv'd to spend our dearest bloud.

Published by I. B. *Gent.*

To the Right Honourable the LORDS, and COMMONS assembled in the high Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the *Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of* HEREFORD.

Who Most humbly pray.

THat the present publique forme of Gods Worship, and the Administration of the blessed Sacraments, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and purest Antiquity, which have beene sundry times established by godly Acts of Parliament, may now againe in these broken and troubled times, bee to Gods glory, and the Churches Peace, re-established and confirmed; That Episcopacy being the Ancient and Primitive Government of the Church, Renowned for Successes, Victorious against Schismes, and Heresies;

and

and especially, of late yeares against that *Hydra* of Heresies, the *Romish* Papacy, Glorious for ancient and late Martyrdomes, Happy before the corruption of Popery, and since the Reformation in the plantation and preservation of Truth and Peace, eminently serviceable to this Common-wealth, most compliable with the Civill Government, into the Fabrick and Body of which it is riveted and incorporated, and most apt and easie at all times by the state to bee reduced into Order; may for the future (as formerly) by your great authority bee continued and maintained, for the glory of God, the preservation of Order, Peace, and Vnity, the Reformation and suppression of wickednesse and vice, and the mature prevention of Schismes, Factions, and Seditions, That Cathedrals, the Monuments of our Forefathers Charity, the reward of present Literature and furtherance of Piety, bee also continued.

The which wee your humble Petitioners the more earnestly beseech your Honours to grant, for that strange feares doe possesse our Hearts, that the sudden Mutation of Government, so long setled, so well knowne, and approved, cannot recompence the Disturbances and Disorders which it may worke by Novelty, with any proportionable utility, being most confident, in your Honours, Wisdomes, and Justice, that all Excesses, Exorbitances, and Encroachments, that shall bee found issuing not from any poyson in the nature of the Discipline, but rather from the infirmity and corruption of the Persons (unto which the very best Government is subject) shall bee duely regulated and corrected.

And your Petitioners shall pray, &c.

Subscribed by *Knights, Esquires,* and *Gentlemen* of Quality, 68
Doctours, 8
Ministers of good repute, as will appeare by the Originall Petitions, 150
Freeholders and Inhabitants of the County of Hereford. 3600

To the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the Honourable House of *Commons* assembled in PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the *Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, of the County of* Cornwall.

Humbly shewing,

THat wee are no lesse thankefull for the many excellent Lawes which by his Majesties grace and favour, and your care and assiduous-

ſiduouſneſſe, you have obtained for us; then thoſe who have beene more forward to preſent you with Petitions; doubting not, but you will welcome this with as hearty acceptance, as you have done any other, it proceeding from loyall hearts to our Soveraigne, a tender care of our Proteſtation, and aboundance of affection to the Commonwealth; And whereas wee underſtand that there is a purpoſe, if not a preſentment already to this honourable Houſe, of a Petition heretofore by ſome Iuſtices of the Peace tendred to the grand Enqueſt, at our laſt Aſſiſes, to be by them conſidered, whether fit to be preſented to this Honourable Houſe; which on deliberate debate was much diſliked, as it was laid; but ſince (as we are informed) indirectly obtruded on diverſe perſons, without reading or perusall; many of them ſince retracting their opinions, and wiſhing back their hands; and we having reſolved to reſt upon the abilities, and care of our Knights and Burgeſſes, our hands and mouths, for matter of our particular concernments; yet ſince their abſence from us, and attendance in Parliament, finding and feeling our owne grievances, giving us juſt grounds and feare of ſudden miſery, by diſobedience and contempt of Lawes; thus provoked with bleeding hearts, wee beg the helpe of your Wiſedomes, to adviſe and apply ſome ſpeedy remedy for theſe felt and feared evils, And for as much as there are lately riſen amongſt us ſome few of the Clergy, and many of the Laity, publike contemners and depravers of the Ceremonies and the Service of the Booke of Common Prayer, by Law eſtabliſhed, irreverent vilifiers of Gods Houſe, and Church Aſſemblies in Prayer times, and generally diſobedient to Eccleſiaſticall Government, of whom many have ſubſcribed or ſubſigned to the recited Petition; Although the ſaid Ceremonies and Booke of Common Prayer, are by far the greater and diſcreeter part of our Congregations inoffenſively and reverently received and approved.

1 WE pray (no way preſuming) to preſcribe rules, but ſubmitting to your graver Judgements, that a Nationall Synod of our learned, and approved Clergy, by the reſt to be choſen, may be convened, and ſome Parliamentary courſe ſpeeded, for the ordaining, confirming, & eſtabliſhing of the ſaid Service Booke, and Ceremonies, or ſome of them, or others not repugnant to Gods Word, tending moſt to the peace and purity of our Religion and Church; before which ſettlement, our humble deſires are, that a Parliamentary Declaration, may ſpeedily iſſue forth, for requiring of obedience to the Lawes eſtabliſhed.

2 We likewiſe humbly pray the continuance of that ancient and ever reverenced Epiſcopall Government in our Church, and that the Delinquences of any particular perſon, may not cauſe that high and holy Office, or Calling, to ſuffer.

3 We pray likewiſe that in every Pariſh unprovided, there may bee a Preaching Miniſter, and a competent maintenance raiſed for him, and where Impropriations are, and Preaching Miniſters not ſufficiently cared for, allowance may be had or bettered.

4 We pray likewiſe that ſuch of our Clergy, as upon enquiry, ſhall be found either Scandalous or not Orthodox, may bee admoniſhed, and bound for the better ſupply and diſcharge of their Cures, or removed.

5 Wee pray likewiſe that ſome poſitive Law may bee Inacted for Parſons and Vicars recovery of their Tithes, and that ſuch courſe may bee taken for the obtaining of them, as may bee moſt ſpeedy, and leaſt chargeable; *That ſo they that Miniſter at the Altar, may live by the Altar.*

6 We pray likewiſe that for the reſtraining and preventing of inordinate licenciouſneſſe, there may be ſome penall Law Inacted for the puniſhment of Adulteries, and diverſe other offences not puniſhable by the Common Law.

7 As likewiſe that there may be ſome Coerſive power or Law, ordained for compelling of refactory men to the payment of their rates, and for the reparations of their Pariſh Churches, in which of late ſome are growne very remiſſe and backward.

8 Wee pray likewiſe that great care may bee taken not onely for diſarming of Recuſants, but for the Education of their children in the Proteſtant Religion.

9 Wee likewiſe pray that ſome ſpeedy courſe may bee taken for the Redemption of thoſe wofull Chriſtian Captives in *Barbarie*, the want of whom, hath occaſioned an extraordinary decay and poverty in our Maritime Townes and Pariſhes, and that our Coaſts may bee ſufficiently gaurded and ſecured.

10 Wee likewiſe pray that whereas this County hath beene and is ſurcharged double, at leaſt, with Armes, and very high in Subſidies, much above our abilities, and the reſpective charge of diverſe parts of this Kingdome; we may (in conſideration hereof) bee relieved in future.

11 Wee likewiſe pray that the Sheriffes Turne, now growne an unneceſſary Court, and onely uſed to the grievous oppreſſion of the meaner

meaner ſort of people, may bee ſuppreſſed, and taken away, it being more burdenſome then the Office of the Clerke of the Market formerly hath beene.

12 Wee likewiſe pray that ſuch Dutchey Tenants as within our County pay over their rightfull Rents and Duties unto the Dutchy Officers may not bee doubly charged by Proces out of the Exchequer, as now they are, by extreame and continuall Amercements.

13 Wee likewiſe pray that there may bee a reparation of the decay of the Caſtle of Saint *Mawes*, and that there may bee a ſupply of the wants of Ordnances, Carriages, Powder, and Ammunition, in all which, it is extreamely defective.

And thus withall humblenes, Craving pardon for with-holding you from your other Weighty Affaires, but perſwaded that the cauſe is conſiderable, and may well challenge a part of your thoughts, and be put in action; for the effecting of which, as of all things ſtanding to the Purity and Peace of our Church, and Religion, as for the ſafe Defence and Honour of his Majeſtie, his Royall Poſterity, and Kingdomes; And in theſe, your and our happineſſe, as for uniting of his Gratious Majeſtie and this Honourable Aſſembly in a mutuall conſent and compliancy, as for the unanimous and proſperous proceedings of this Parliament, wee doe, and ever ſhall, with humble hearts implore Gods gracious aſſiſtance and bleſſing.

The

The Index of the Petitions.

	Pag.
Cheshire.	1
Oxford University.	4
Cambridge Universitie.	6
Nottingham.	8
Huntington.	9
Somerset.	13
Rutland.	15
Cheshire.	21
Colledges, Halls, &c.	23
Exeter Diocesse.	24
Staffordshire.	25
Diocesse of Canterbury.	26
Six Counties of North-Wales.	27
Lancashire.	29
Cornwall.	32
Kent.	33
Oxford County.	36
Cornwall.	37
Hereford.	39
Cornwall.	40